

Read to Me Stars Library Profiles

American Falls District Library [applied April 2003]

308 Roosevelt, American Falls, ID

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American Falls District Library received an LSTA Read to Me minigrant in 1999 and 2002. They also participated in First Book in 1999, 2000, and 2001 and Child Care Reads in 2003.

Outreach: Outreach program for elementary ESL kindergarten class; provide Head Start with special programs upon request; participate in parent night at school for ESL parents; provide scholarships for non resident cards. Funding has come from the library budget as well as grants from Idaho Community Fund, Idaho State Library, Ifft Foundation, and the King Foundation.

Partnerships: Elementary school; community support committee; Idaho Migrant Head Start

In library: after-school reading groups; preschool storyhours weekly; bilingual story hours during summer; summer reading for migrant Head Start and summer school children; new program: art in the park in partnership with local art guild.

Collection: 30% of library materials budget goes to children's books; in addition Spanish language books, videos, books on tape and educational materials for programming are purchased; has board books and bilingual books; circulates story kits

Professional development: at least one staff member has attended all Read to Me training opportunities and ISL summer institute. The library funds formal training at ISU for interested staff; participates in ILA conferences.

How the library has benefited:

I have often said that so many of our library programs stem from the Read to Me funding and training we have received. We have always targeted adult education as a necessary part of any children's programming. This adult education element has led to computer classes, historical presentation, community involvement special event evenings; all of which have helped bring a very fragmented community more solidly together. In spreading the word about early childhood literacy the need for more (and better) Spanish language materials became very evident. We now have a good and very well used collection of both adult and children's materials. Our use by our Hispanic population has grown considerable since we started our Read to Me adventure. The availability of books, support materials and programming in Spanish has convinced these families that we are sincere in our desire to help them help their families. And once again, the blending of the children in our programming and the "meet and greet" atmosphere in our library has helped open the door to more and friendly dialog between the Hispanic and Anglo elements of our population. The two children in the picture are younger siblings of children who met in our programming efforts. These two brought their parents together in a friendship that would not have happened if these families were not brought together by their use of the library.